

The Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to recite the feature that the carbonaceous mixture comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals. Moreover, Applicants note that pending claims 3, 9-18, and 20 all depended from claim 1. Thus, in view of the Amendment to claim 1 it is believed that the rejection for lack of enablement has been obviated.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 1, 3, 9-18, and 20 stand rejected allegedly for as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicant regards as the invention. It is believed that this rejection is obviated in view of the amendment to claim 1.

In his rejection the Examiner stated that the claims were indefinite because the claims failed to recite the essential limitation of expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals.

The Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to recite the feature that the carbonaceous mixture comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals. Moreover, Applicants note that pending claims 3, 9-18, and 20 all depended from claim 1. Thus, in view of the Amendment to claim 1 it is believed that the rejection for lack of enablement has been obviated.

The Examiner also rejected claims 25-26 because the claim term "is used for" was allegedly indefinite. In view of the fact that claims 25-26 have been canceled, it is believed that this rejection is obviated.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b)

Claims 1, 3, 14-18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,282,975 ("Maryasin").

Maryasin discloses a method for using a particular vermicular structure of expanded graphite particles for a selective absorption of petroleum products from a water media. Maryasin does not disclose a carbonaceous mixture, which comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals. Since Maryasin does not disclose all the elements of the claims, Maryasin does not anticipate the claims.

Claims 1, 3, 14-18 and 20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,788,865 ("Smirnov").

Smirnov discloses a process for separating a hydrophobic liquid from a substantially polar medium through the application of expanded graphite particles. Smirnov does not disclose a carbonaceous mixture, which comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals. Since Smirnov does not disclose all the elements of the claims, Smirnov does not anticipate the claims.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a)

Claims 25-26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being obvious in view of Maryasin.

Applicant notes that claim 25-26 have been canceled. Therefore, it is believed that the rejection of claims 25-26 for obviousness has been obviated.

Moreover, as pointed out above Maryasin does not disclose or suggest a carbonaceous mixture, which comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals. Since Maryasin does not disclose or suggest all the elements of the claims, Maryasin does not render the claims obvious.


CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is believed that the present application is in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is invited, after consideration of the present response, to contact the undersigned to discuss any issue in this case that would expedite allowance of the subject application.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Versions with Markings to Show Changes

In the Claims:

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

1. A method for removing chemical pollutants comprising the steps of:
 - a. preparing a carbonaceous mixture of a graphite-containing feedstock;
 - b. placing the carbonaceous mixture in a contaminated medium containing chemical pollutants; and,
 - c. collecting the carbonaceous mixture saturated with chemical pollutants,wherein the carbonaceous mixture comprises expanded graphite and carbonaceous nanocrystals.

Please cancel claims 25 and 26.

Please add the following new claim.

34. The method of claim 1, wherein the contaminated medium is an industrial discharge.